

Jan 12 The Baptism of the Lord

It is the first revelation—for all to see—of XT as a member of the TRINITY. In the Orthodox Church a very important Feast.

God the Father speaks through the clouds. Clouds are always a sign of God's Presence.

The **Cloud** protected the Israelites as they escaped Egypt.

God the Son being baptized in the river, a new CREATION through WATER and God the Holy Spirit in the shape of a dove descends from heaven

Isaiah is quoted by Matthew. Remember I said Matthew wants to show that Jesus fulfill all that the prophets said. “**A covenant of the people**” = The **Messiah-XT** will be a **NEW Covenant**.

The **Psalm** is also reflected with these words: voice of the LORD is over the vast waters, and. . . above the flood. Think Genesis.

A misreading and misunderstanding of Acts led some to think that Jesus only ‘became’ the Second Person of the Trinity AFTER the MAN, “Jesus of Nazareth”, was baptized. So Matt and Luke with their Infancy Stories show he was BORN Divine. JESUS was just REVEALED—as God, as the CHRIST, the Messiah—in John's Baptism. Revealed to all who chose to ‘SEE’. After 300+ years of figuring it out in the early Church, we finally figured how to express that Xt is both God and Man. But not HOW. That is a mystery. Peter makes it clear that XT came for PAGANS, like Cornelius, too.

So today in Matthew's Gospel,, we see the TRINITY, and XT **IS** a member.

Jesus the Christ/ Messiah

The Voice from the Heavens, **the Father**. [Reflected in the Psalm]

And the ***SPIRIT OF GOD**, like a DOVE.

[* in Greek “Pneuma Theou” = the **BREATH** of God; **πνεῦμα τοῦ θεοῦ**.

As I said Pneuma means: Spirit, Wind, or Breath. And I also said before that a BIRD is a universal ‘mediator’—in ALL cultures—between this material **EARTH** and the immaterial airy **Heavens** above, which cannot be grabbed onto or held in place.]

Each GREEK term highlights a different aspect we get of this non-concrete Person of the Trinity.

How does the **Hagion Pneuma, The Holy Breath**, act in Sacred History, in the Bible?

Or Hagia Sophia, **Αγία Σοφία**? [Wisdom] How does WISDOM, interact with God's People?

This **wisdom**, the Hagia Sophia, the HOLY WISDOM, IS the Paraclete promised in the gospel.

Our Attorney, the Paraclete, will represent us in court—The Heavenly Court. What's there to fear? The Hagia Sophia will be our attorney, who will speak for us before the court!

How can we fail, if God is on our side?

Even the SYMBOL of a Dove adds another facet to how WE view the Trinity.

So I will resubmit some of what we saw and said about John The Baptist in Advent. It won't hurt to see and read it again.

This Feast marks the official END of the CHRISTMAS SEASON—even Hallmark Channel has ended Xmas Movies! And we Catholics start the Ordinary Sundays of the year.

WATER: One of the first elements of creation—created by the Father through the Son—is now re-created through the Incarnate Son. The Word Incarnate stands in the waters of the very earth which was created through Him, (Remember John's gospel: “In the beginning was the Word. . .” at Xmas) and begins the re-creation. Into these waters, through which the people of Israel were once delivered, the entire human race is now invited to follow Jesus.

Here the image is a NEW CREATION as in Genesis, where the Holy Breath of God, Creating and life-giving, moved over the unformed and chaotic ‘waters’--giving birth to the life of this world. The Orthodox therefore have a “Blessing of the Waters” on this day. The Danube, Volga, and in PGH various Xtian denominations join to bless the Monongahela!

Here are some pics of the place where John was baptizing. On the left is a church from c. 650 on the site.



There were also mitzvah ritual baths near the Temple in Jerusalem where Jews would “rinse themselves” [baptizein] before entering.

They held their new, clean clothes over their head and walked in, putting the NEW CLEAN clothes on when they walked out. Clean. Ready to enter God's Temple.



Walking down to the Jordan—Remembering their Baptism; re-committing themselves.

Xtians are only baptized ONCE. But we need to re-commit ourselves often.



Orthodox



Orthodox
releasing the
Dove
on the feast
of
John the Baptist
in January



In all
mythologies
the bird
connects

heaven
and
earth

because it can fly up
into the Heavens
and then returns
to Earth



[There is another baptizing site (where the Jordan flows out of the Sea of Galilee) but Matt's Gospel says: "HE LEFT GALILEE!" This implies that the site of the Baptism was in today's Jordan. [see the powerpoint] (I never got there because it was in Jordan). That was where John did his 'rinsing' – βαπτίζεῖν-- away of our sinfulness ironically in the MUDDY Jordan. Jesus says: "OK, I know I don't need it; but I do this as an example." Why? As the Jew washed in the Mitzvah to prepare for entering the Temple, where God was especially present to his people, so too XT who IS the NEW TEMPLE of God's PRESENCE with his people, prepares himself by being baptized by John.]

John the Baptist {As I noted November 17 }

John the Baptist is the LAST Prophet. E.g., Matt 11:10; Mark 1:2 & 9:13; Luke 7:27; and even Romans 9:13. John is especially important for Orthodox, because here we see the TRINITY acting before us! Catholics and Orthodox regularly 'make the sign of the Cross', a sign of a Trinitarian Faith. In fact, Orthodox make it 3X, once for each Person. John the Baptist is the *One Who Prepares the Way of The Lord*. JOHN proclaims: HERE is the promised Messiah, in the person of my cousin, Jesus!

After we finish with the Xmas Season, we come back again to John the Baptist as we start the ORDINARY Church Year (for Catholics). It seems a little repetitious but that is how Xt started his Public Life—with John at the Jordan.

Isaiah paints a picture of the expected Messiah. He comes “a light for the nations” (read *Gentiles*; other nations besides Jews). Isaiah is echoed in Acts and the Gospel.

In ACTS Peter states (after he had a dream from God, as often happens, and happened to Joseph) that the Household of Cornelius, a hated Roman Centurion, is also included in *Sons of God*. If you look the God here is also a TRINITY...God (the Father) was with him; and anointed Jesus with the HOLY SPIRIT (by the Holy ‘**Breath**’, in Greek, Πνεύματι Ἁγίῳ).

In the Gospel we read, Matthew’s account of John’s Baptism of Jesus. And not only is Jesus God, the whole TRINITY is present. Again.

Our lesson is: Don’t be too quick to limit those who can belong to God’s family. God can “paint” anyone He wants in HIS picture!

Orthodox at the Jordan

From November and Advent: I wrote:

I WILL SHOW THIS AGAIN AT THE FEAST OF THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

Jan 12 and 19

This VID is an exceptional explanation of the theology of the Feast.

*****good vid shows doves & Trinity 3 min**

BE REMINDED of our own baptism

Notice how the Orthodox bless themselves 3 X. Once for each Person.

They hold their hands,

w **first two fingers together** and the thumb
joined to express the TRINITY.

The other 2 representing the TWO Natures in Xt.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=plCFP-zx5no>

ORTHODOX BAPTIZING at the Jordan
SHOWS DOVE

1:45

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KwMYaKDCXfg>

***Various kinds of Orthodox

Start at 2:40 if you want

First you will see some archaeological sites. Should be interesting. We all can't take a trip to the Holy Land. You will see the site of the early church built to mark the site.

You will note that the border between Israel and Jordan is fortified. @3:30 which is why I have no pics from my trip there. We couldn't go into Jordan.

. . .then a procession, the Blacks are Ethiopian Copts. [Like the Egyptian Copts.]

Ethiopia and Armenia (S Russia and N Iraq) are the two OLDEST Xtian Nations.

The Xtians of INDIA are a close second. Called St. Thomas Xtians, India has both Catholic and Orthodox. In fact, there are more Catholics in India than in POLAND!

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OLJ0A_n3j4c

5 min